

Appl. No. 10/760,168
Resp. dated November 14, 2006
Reply to Final Office Action dated September 27, 2006

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NOV 17 2006**REMARKS**

After entry of this Amendment, claims 1-4, 6, 8, 10-16, and 19-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Claim 8 has been amended to correct a minor grammatical error. Claims 9, 17 and 18 have been canceled. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

In the Final Office Action dated September 27, 2006, claims 1-3 and 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Church, U.S. Patent No. 6,393,877 in view of Valiulis et al, U.S. Patent No. D470,395. The Examiner asserts it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to place the bracket disclosed in Valiulis on the slot track shown in Church such that the J-hooks of Valiulis would be hooked over the edge of the slats of the slot track. Claim 9 has been canceled and is no longer pending in the application. It is submitted that Church does not anticipate, teach or suggest the slot track storage system including a slot track with generally T-shaped slots having opposite undercut sidewalls that form at least one generally T-shaped slot and at least one removable mounting bracket as disclosed in the present invention. As recited in claim 1, from which claims 2, 3 and 10-12 depend, the removable mounting bracket includes a first J-shaped hook extending from one edge of the support portion and opening in a first direction over an edge of the slat into the undercut sidewall, a second J-shaped hook opening in the first direction to hook over an edge of the adjacent slot into the undercut sidewall, and a spring arm. The first and second J-shaped hooks have a first leg extending in a direction generally perpendicular from an edge of the support portion and a second leg extending from the distal end of the first leg in a direction generally parallel to the support portion. The spring arm extends from the first J-shaped hook generally in a direction opposite to the first direction to engage the underside of the undercut sidewall opposite the undercut sidewall of the generally T-shaped slot forming the edge of the slat supporting the first J-shaped hook.

Church discloses a security support assembly 10 for the display of sales items and for the protection of unauthorized removal of the display items. Col. 4, ll. 54-58. The assembly 10 includes a base member 12 comprised of two sections 14, 16 that are individually inserted into a slot support surface 24, independent of one another. Col. 6, ll. 17-

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22 and Figs. 1 and 8. Each section 14, 16 includes a flange 30, 32, respectively, that is inserted into a pair of channels 34 the slot support to prevent the base member 12 from disengaging from the slot support. The two sections 14, 16 are then secured together with tamper resistant fasteners 18, preventing the base member 12 from directly disengaging from the slot support surface 24. Col. 6, ll. 36-48 and Figs. 1 and 8. However, the mounting bracket does include a spring arm extending from the first flange 30 generally in a direction opposite to the first direction to engage the underside of the undercut sidewall opposite the undercut sidewall of the generally T-shaped slot forming the edge of the slot supporting the first flange 30.

Valiulus discloses a design for a four-pronged display hook back for a slatwall. As shown in Figs. 1, 3, and 5, each prong is J-shaped. This reference is relevant only for its disclosure of a bracket having J-shaped prongs to be used in a slatwall. Therefore, Church and Valiulus, taken singly or in combination do not render obvious a slot track having generally T-shaped slots having opposite undercut sidewalls that form at least one generally T-shaped slot and at least one removable bracket having a spring arm extending from the first J-shaped hook generally in a direction opposite to the first direction to engage the underside of the undercut sidewall opposite the undercut sidewall of the generally T-shaped slot forming the edge of the slot supporting the first J-shaped hook as recited in claim 1, which claims 2-3 and 10-12 include by dependency.

Further, it would not be obvious to modify the base bracket disclosed in Church to have J-shaped flanges as disclosed in Valiulus. The base member in Church is comprised of a two-piece bracket member and each piece is inserted into the channels individually and independent from each other and are secured together to prevent the bracket from disengaging from the channels. If the flanges on the bracket members are modified to the J-shaped configuration as disclosed in Valiulus, the bracket would not be retained in the channels in the same manner and the two-piece assembly would not be required. Applicants' respectfully submit that claims 1-3 and 10-12 are not rendered obvious by Church and Valiulus, taken singly or in combination. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Church in view of Valiulus as applied to claims 1-3 and 9-12 above, and further in view of Parnell, U.S. Patent No. 4,694,965. The Examiner asserts that it would have been obvious to

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one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have provided the slot track of Church with tapered edges as taught by Parnell. The addition of Parnell does not render obvious the subject matter of claim 8 because, as stated above, neither Church nor Valiulis discloses a slot track having generally T-shaped slots having opposite undercut sidewalls that form at least one generally T-shaped slot and at least one removable bracket having a spring arm extending from the first J-shaped hook generally in a direction opposite to the first direction to engage the underside of the undercut sidewall opposite the undercut sidewall of the generally T-shaped slot forming the edge of the slot supporting the first J-shaped hook as recited in claim 1, from which claim 8 depends. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6, and 17-20 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over certain claims of U.S. Patent No. 6, 811, 043. Claims 17 and 18 have been canceled and are no longer pending in the application. A Terminal Disclaimer is submitted herewith to overcome the obviousness-type double patenting rejection of claims 1-4, 6, and 17-20 over the prior patent.

Claims 13-16 stand objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 13 has been amended to independent form including the limitations of base claim 1 and intervening claims 3 and 9. It is submitted that these amendments place claims 13-16 in suitable condition for allowance. Notification of the allowance of claims 13-16 is requested.

This after-final amendment does not raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search, since the proposed amendments incorporate previously recited limitations from dependent claims into the independent claims and these limitations have been previously considered and searched by the Examiner; does not raise the issue of new matter, since the proposed amendments have support in the originally filed application including the specification, claims and drawings; does place the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing and/or simplifying the issues for appeal; and/or does not present additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims.

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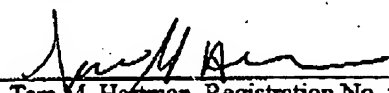
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It is respectfully submitted that this Amendment traverses and overcomes all of the Examiner's objections and rejections to the application and places the application in suitable condition for allowance; notice of which is respectfully requested. Reconsideration of the application as amended is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Signature

Date: November 17, 2006

Barbara L. Katowich